



December 9, 2016

Seattle City Hall
600 4th Ave
Seattle, WA 98104

Dear Members of Seattle City Council and Mayor Ed Murray,

The council passed a strong version of the Move-in Fee Legislation out of committee. We urge you to pass this legislation at full council **without exempting any landlords or passing other amendments that weaken the legislation.**

Properties with one to four units make up a substantial portion of the rental market in Seattle. According to the Seattle Department of Construction and Inspection, 21,702 rental properties have one to four units, 1,910 rental properties have five to 10 units, and 2,591 rental properties have more than 10 units. Because some deadlines for registering small properties have not yet passed, the number of registered rental properties with one to four units will go up.

Exempting any landlords, especially those with four or less units on their property, will drastically reduce the number of tenants who benefit from this legislation. Single family homes and smaller properties are typically the most affordable rentals, but tenants of these properties still need to pay high upfront costs under our current system.

The entire point of the Move-in Fee Legislation is to make it possible for communities most at risk of homelessness or being pushed out of Seattle to access housing in the city. We cannot create any exemptions that prevent tens of thousands of tenants from benefiting from this legislation.

This modest legislation will not hurt landlords. If a tenant damages a rental, landlords still have numerous tools at their disposal to be made whole again. They can take the tenant to small claims court and garnish their wages. They use their ability to block the tenant's ability to rent elsewhere by being a negative reference until they are fully repaid. Landlords often send the tenant to collections, greatly limiting their ability to rent elsewhere or do anything that requires

good credit until they are repaid.

Furthermore, deposits are most often used at the end of someone's tenancy after they have moved out, not at the beginning of tenancy while they are still living there. Since this is the case, the liability concern is minimal, and is vastly outweighed by the benefits this proposal offers low-income tenants and getting homeless workers off the streets and into permanent housing.

We urge you to stand with communities of color, people with low-incomes, workers, people with disabilities, the LGBTQ community, immigrants and refugees, workers, seniors, and other disenfranchised communities by passing the Move-in Fee Legislation on December 12th **without any exemptions or amendments that weaken the legislation**. Seattle cannot wait any longer for legislative action remedying the high upfront costs tenants face.

Sincerely,

Mary Nguyen, Washington Community Action Network Executive Director
Nicole Grant, Martin Luther King County Labor Council Executive Secretary-Treasurer
Phyllis Campano, Seattle Education Association President
Sergio Salinas, SEIU6 Property Services NW President
Todd Crosby, UFCW Local 21 President
Rich Stolz, OneAmerica Executive Director
Rachel Berkson, NARAL Executive Director
Danni Askini, Gender Justice League Executive Director
Annette Stofer, AFT Seattle Community Colleges Local 1789 President
Diane Narasaki, Asian Pacific Islander Coalition King County Chair
Diane Sosne, RN, MN SEIU Healthcare 1199NW
Karen Hart, SEIU 925 President
Rebecca Saldaña, Puget Sound Sage Executive Director
Robby Stern, Puget Sound Advocates for Retirement Action President
Ty Pethe, WSFE Local 304 President
Michael Ramos, The Church Council of Greater Seattle Executive Director
Katie Wilson, Transit Riders Union Secretary Treasurer
David Parsons, UAW Local 4121 President
Debbie Carlsen, LGBTQ Allyship Executive Director
Aaron Ostrom, Fuse Washington Executive Director
Tracy Lai, Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance President
Elissa Goss, Washington Student Association Executive Director
Habtamu Abdi, Ethiopian Community in Seattle
Rory O'Sullivan, The Housing Justice Project Executive Director
Corey Snelson, Tenants Union Interim Executive Director
Zachary Pullin, Capitol Hill Community Council President